

**Building lives;
Brazilian camp trains leaders to change lives**

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Tres Ranchos, Brazil (LAMNS)—
Camping makes a difference—just
ask Dinho Pereira.

Dinho, a missionary with the Latin
America Mission, tells of a young
person who attended the first camp
he ever directed in Brazil almost 30
years ago.

“We had a place that was terrible, it
just didn’t have anything,” he
remembers. “The two buildings were
falling down and it was really bad.”
But at that camp there was a young
girl among the 15 youth who attended. “She made a decision for Christ there for the first time in
her life,” he says.



Seven years ago, Dinho crossed paths with that young girl again. “Now she was a young lady,
married to a fine Christian guy that really loved the Lord and they had a drug store. Someone told
him about a camping ministry and he decided to see what it was all about. He discovered that
camping is much more than just employment; it is a place to build lives. The Lord started
speaking to his heart about camping.”

That man, Dirlei Bruder, approached his wife, uncertain about what her reaction would be to the
idea of closing a prosperous business and entering the mission field of Christian camping. “I’ve
been praying also that the Lord would use us in His ministry and I’m going to take the training as
well,” was her response.

Today, Dirlei and his wife, Nadia, are working with Dinho at a brand-new camp, Estancia
Victoria (Victory Camp), which will be used to train camp leaders from all over Brazil and

beyond.



The facility has been open for just over two
years, and some facilities are still under
construction. “We recently started on the
third floor of the dormitory building,”
explains Dinho who is Brazilian. The new
building will allow the camp to house 150
campers. Already in use is a beautiful
assembly and dining hall which offers a
panoramic view of Blue Lake, an recreational
lake that, when full, will come up to the
hall’s front door.

Elsewhere on the property Dinho and his wife Ginny have built recreational facilities, a non-competitive games area and a rappelling facility. The couple hope to add bicycling to canoeing and other programs already underway.

But, for Dinho, the heart of the camp is not the facilities but the people. “The most important things are not the buildings, but building lives,” he explains.

To serve Brazil’s many expanding camping programs, Dinho plans to use Estancia Victoria as a training ground and model camp for leaders from all over the country and, perhaps, around the world. “Our goal is to train people who are going to be full-time workers,” says Ginny who is from Winlock, Washington. “There is a real need for this all over Brazil. Camps are always asking us if we have someone who can come and direct their facilities and programs.”

Many church camps were begun and operated by missionaries who are now retiring according to Dinho. “We have campsites that have some buildings but nobody to be the camp director,” he says. “The idea is to train people that have a vision to serve the Lord through camp ministry. People who are able to plan programs and site development, who are able to get things going.” Dinho says that he has a three-year waiting list of people who want to take the ten-month training program at Estancia Victoria.

The need for camp leaders is urgent not only in Brazil but also across Latin America and around the world. To that end, Dinho plans to offer training for people from many nations. “Camping ministries are growing faster outside of the United States,” he explains. “Not only that, there is a tension between training a Brazilian in a North American setting and training them in a Brazilian or Bolivian setting.” Dinho says that training people from developing nations in Brazil would be more culturally appropriate than taking them to the United States for the same instruction.

He says that there is also a difference in philosophy. “The main goal of many camps in the States is to give the kids a good time, a recreation time, a fun time. For us here in Brazil, camps are a tool of evangelism.”

Dinho and Ginny are looking for other missionaries who are interested serving with them in central Brazil. “We’re looking for someone who can teach, for example, how to use overhead transparencies. We would love to have them come down and stay a week and teach two classes every day on how to use overhead transparencies at the campsite.” The camp would provide translation and can use people with experience in many disciplines.

The couple says that they could also use a full-time missionary or two who have experience in camping and want to work training others.

Related web sites:

Estancia Victoria: www.victoria.org.br

Christian Camping International—Brazil: www.cci.org.br

Latin America Mission: www.lam.org

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